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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
23 April 1972

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in South Vietnam
(As of 1500 EST)

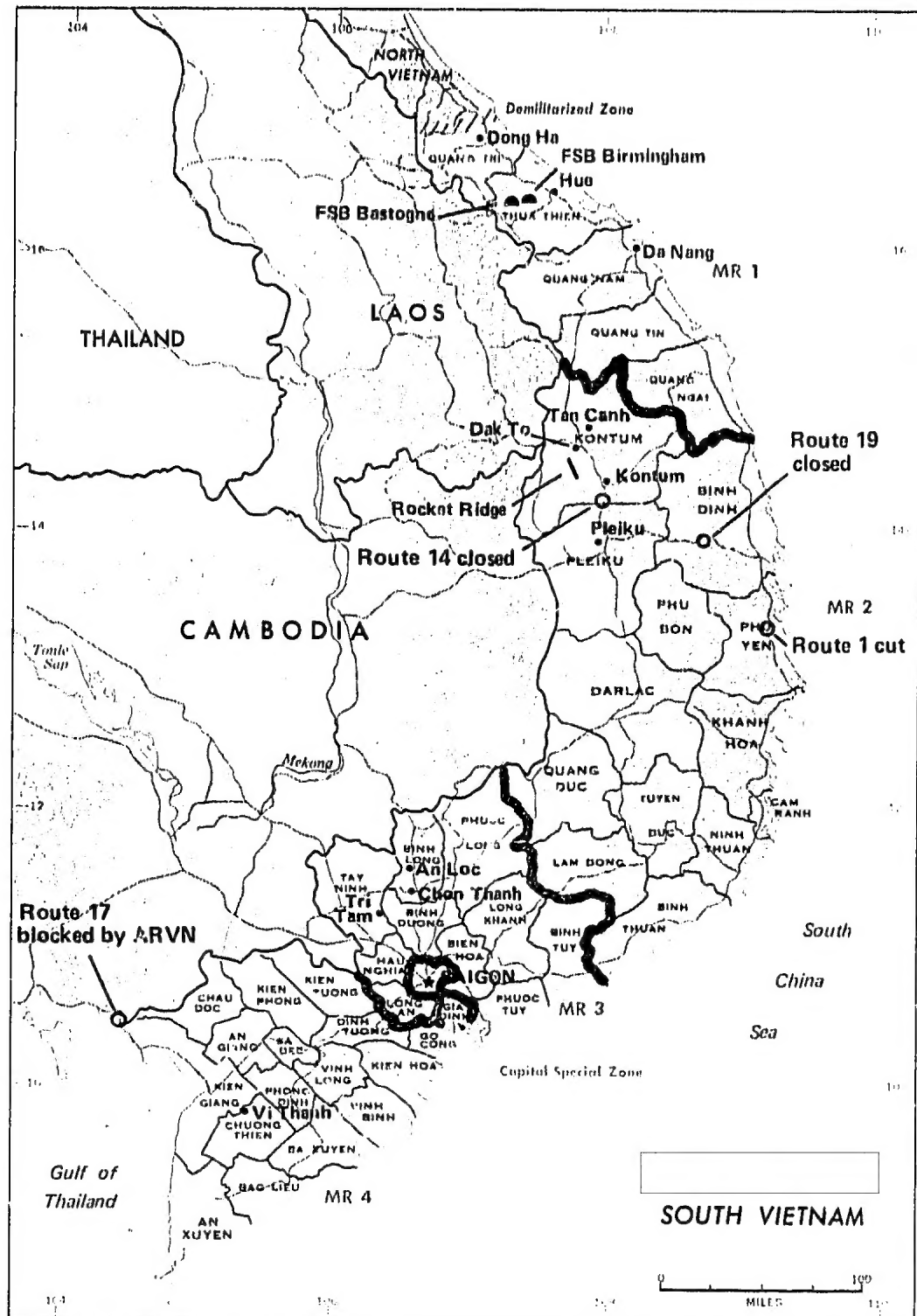
1. The Communists appear to have begun a major drive in Military Region 2 (MR-2). Heavy attacks are being reported in Kontum Province against the headquarters of the ARVN 22nd Infantry Division at Tan Canh south of Dak To. [redacted] tanks are supporting the heavy artillery, mortar and infantry attacks against the base. One enemy tank reportedly was knocked out at the gate to the division's compound after the tactical operations center was hit and its radio put out of order. Tank sightings have also been reported near Fire Support Base (FSB) Delta, which was overrun by the enemy on 21 April, but there is no confirmation as yet of press reports that FSB Yankee, southwest of FSB Delta, has fallen to the enemy.

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2. Elsewhere in MR-2, the enemy continues to interdict major transportation routes. The main supply line between Pleiku and Kontum cities--Route 14--is still closed as is Route 19, the strategic east-west highway linking Pleiku with the coast. In Phu Yen Province, Viet Cong commandos at least temporarily cut Highway 1 in two places: one bridge was blown up north of the district capital of Tuy An and another bridge was destroyed near Ha Yen Village in Song Cau District. The Phu Yen Province chief has ordered all US personnel to stay off the main highways except inside the major cities.

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Engagements in MR-1

3. As yet unconfirmed press reports indicate that the Communists are conducting a heavy armored assault against Dong Ha in northern Quang Tri Province. FSBs Bastogne and Birmingham were shelled on 23 April and light enemy ground probes against the bases were reported. Da Nang City was hit by artillery on the night of 23 April, and the Marble Mountain Airfield was rocketed. Only light damage was reported. Elsewhere in MR-1, enemy action consisted mostly of local-force attacks against government security forces in the coastal lowlands of the southern three provinces.

An Loc Resupplied

4. The beleaguered provincial capital of An Loc in Binh Long Province was resupplied by government helicopters on 23 April and some of the wounded have been airlifted out of the city. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] enemy pressure against the city during the past few hours has been light and government troops reportedly are making some headway recapturing northern portions of the town from the enemy. Government sweep operations south and west of the city and similar operations around Chon Thanh south of An Loc have produced only light contacts with the enemy.

5. [REDACTED] the Communists [REDACTED] are impressing all able-bodied males between 14 and 45 years of age for service in enemy units. [REDACTED] some government civilian and military personnel are working with the Viet Cong to help the enemy identify former South Vietnamese officials trying to escape.

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6. The district capital of Tri Tam, also called Dau Tieng, in western Binh Duong Province is still in friendly hands, and enemy action around the town on 23 April was reported light. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] their battalion suffered almost 50 percent casualties

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during an air strike which stalled enemy attempts to capture the town on 22 April.

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Local Action Still Heavy in Delta

7. Viet Cong local force action continued heavy in MR-4, with the bulk of the enemy attacks concentrated in Chuong Thien Province. Most of the mortar and ground attacks on 23 April were directed against government outposts. The three Communist main force regiments--the D-1, D-2 and 18B--near Chuong Thien's provincial capital of Vi Thanh may also have been involved in these actions. Along the Cambodian border with Kien Giang Province, ARVN soldiers are blocking Route 17 and warning civilians not to travel on the highway because the road is dangerous and largely controlled by the Communists. In western Kien Giang Province, food supplies in the Ha Thien District capital are reportedly getting low, and the residents are worried about rumors that the Communists will soon attack.

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